1: Hanks E-5 (1953-1954) 1964 AO7 Central Thai AO7

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The field work for this paper was carried out in 1953-54 under the auspices of the Cornell Thailand Project sponsored by the Department of Anthropology and the Southeast Asia Program of Cornell University and financed largely by funds granted to Cornell by the Carnegie Corporation of New York. Additional funds were provided by the Wenner Gren Foundation of New York. Indirect support came from the U.S. Educational Foundation in Thailand through the Fulbright award granted the author's husband, Dr. L.M. Hanks, so that the stay in Thailand might be lengthened.

The author wishes to express her gratitude to Dr. Lauriston Sharp, Director of the Thailand Project, and to the other members of the Cornell research group. Her debt is especially great to Dr. Hazel M. Hauck, who set the frame for the study of childbirth, and to Dr. Saovanee Sudsaneh. Their assistance has been unstinting and their notes, turned over in full, have been a rich mine of information. Additional materials came from Dr. Sharp, Dr. L.M. Hanks, Dr. Kamol Janlekha, Dr. Robert Textor, Mr. Loebongs Sarabaya, Mr. Judun Kongsa, Mr. Aram Emarun, and Mr. Singto Metah. Assistance at various points was given by Dr. Charles Archaimbault, Dr. J. Ingersoll, and Dr. Herbert Phillips. Many insights also came from the members of the Wartenstein Conference of the Wenner Gren Foundation in 1959, in particular Dr. Robert Heine-Geldern, Dr. Kenneth Wells, and Dr. Siribongs Boonlong. The lifelong research of Phya Anuman Rajadhon permits this regional study to take its place in a larger scene. To all of these institutions and persons thanks are extended.

For the sustained friendliness and courtesy of the people of Bang Chan who made every visit happy and fruitful, the author is particularly grateful.

I am deeply grateful to Dr. Henry F. Dobyns for his kindness in seeing this paper through the final phases of production, to Dr. R.B. Jones for certain linguistic corrections, to Mr. Warin Wonghanchao for preparation of the glossary, and to Mrs. Marilyn Cartier for preparing the manuscript for printing. The paper was prepared for reproduction by the staff of the Comparative Studies of Cultural Change of the Department of Anthropology under Contract AID/csd-295 with the U.S. Agency for International Development.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

122 For the period of her field study, 1952-53, one of us (H.M.H.) received an award for advanced research from the United States Educational (Fulbright) Foundation in Thailand. Another (S.S.), who was field worker with the Cornell Thailand Project during 1953-54, was enabled to come to the United States for graduate study through a travel grant from the same Foundation. She held an assistantship in the Southeast Asia Program at Cornell University 1954-55, and the Anna Cora Smith Scholarship for Research in Home Economics, 1955-56.

114 [122] To their co-workers in the field, Dr. Anusith Rajatasilpin and Miss Sapha Indrasud whose services in connection with the medical inspection were provided by the Food and Drug Administration, Bangkok, through the courtesy of its director, Dr. Yong H. Chutima, the authors express their appreciation.

Most helpful information concerning techniques which might be used in carrying out dietary studies was provided by Miss M. W. Grant of the Applied Nutrition Unit, London School of Tropical Medicine. Dr. Amara Chandrapanond suggested adaptations suitable to the local situation.

The transcription of Thai terms was checked by Mr. Marvin Brown. Dr. W. J. Dress assisted by checking the scientific names of food plants for which the authors had previously obtained identification. Many minor points were cleared up by discussion with Thai students in this country. The help of all these persons is gratefully acknowledged.

Most of all, the authors are indebted to the people of Bang Chan: to all who patiently answered their questions, to Khruu Sawad Sangtong and Khruu Yod Nakon who obtained diet records from children in the third and fourth grades, and especially to the members of the eleven households that participated in the quantitative dietary study. These people not only cooperated generously, but accepted us as friends. For their kindly assistance the authors are deeply grateful.

[p. vi is blank]

3:Hauck et al. D-5 (1952-1954) 1959 AO7 Central Thai AO7
Bang Chan

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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122 received an award for advanced research from the United States Educational (Fulbright) Foundation in Thailand.

The author wishes to express her gratitude for the assistance of her Thai co-workers: Dr. Anusith Rajatasilpin and Miss Sapha Indrasud, whose services were provided by the Food and Drug Administration, Bangkok, Thailand, through the courtesy of its director, Dr. Yong H. Chutima; and Miss Saovanee Sudsaneh, who served as field worker with the Cornell Thailand Project during 1953-54.

114 In connection with their graduate study at Cornell, Sylvia de la Paz summarized the observations on feeding practices of children from birth to two years, and Barbara J. Smith summarized data obtained on growth in height and weight of infants and small children in Bang Chan.

123 The author is particularly grateful for the interest and friendliness of the parents, especially the mothers of Bang Chan. They patiently answered our questions at each visit and reassured the small children who seldom saw strangers and who were unused to being weighed and measured. Without their generous cooperation this study would not have been possible.

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4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
AO7 Central Thai AO7
Bang Chan

122 The Ford Foundation, through its Foreign Area Training Fellowship Program, provided the funds for the field research and some additional time for writing, and for these I am extremely grateful. I also wish to thank the Cornell Research Center in Bangkok and the Fels Foundation for providing funds toward special parts of the research.

000 The teachers who served on my graduate committee at Cornell University and who supervised the writing of the earlier version of this study were Professors Lauriston Sharp and Morris Edward Opler. My debt to them far exceeds the usual obligations owed to benevolent, if hard-headed, readers of a doctoral dissertation: it is primarily from them that I received much of the knowledge and inspiration that bear on my present professional interests. Others who contributed to my training and to whom I am warmly grateful are Professors Robert M. MacLeod, Robert J. Smith, William W. Lambert, and my undergraduate instructors, Professors Daniel J. Levinson, David M. Schneider, and the late Clyde Kluckhohn.

Acknowledgment is due Harper & Row, Publishers, for permission to quote several passages from essays in *Studying Personality Cross-Culturally*, Bert Kaplan, editor; to the Addison-Wesley Publishing Company for permission to quote from Alex Inkeles' and Daniel J. Levinson's "National Character: The Study of Modal Personality and Socio-Cultural Systems" in *Handbook of Social Psychology*, Volume II, Gardner Lindzey, editor; to The RAND Corporation and Stanford University Press for permission to quote from David A. Wilson's "Thailand and Marxism" in *Marxism in Southeast Asia*, Frank N. Trager, editor; to Routledge and Kegan Paul, Ltd. and to Beacon Press for permission to quote from Johan Huizinga's *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture*; to the World Publishing Company for permission to quote from Clyde Kluckhohn's "Common Humanity and Diverse Cultures" in *The Human Meaning of the Social Sciences*, Daniel Lerner, editor; and to the editors of the *American Anthropologist* for permission to quote from several articles that have appeared in their journal over the years.

Finally, my appreciation is deepest to my wife, Barbara, for her contributions—practical, intellectual, and emotional—during every phase of this work.

Berkeley, California
August 1964

4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
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Introduction

The purpose of this study is twofold: (1) to provide a basic description of 121
the dominant personality traits of the adult members of a Central Plain Thai community; and (2) to demonstrate a procedure for dealing with many of the methodological problems, theoretical and technical, that are encountered in cross-cultural personality research. The primary data are observational materials and the responses of 111 Bang Chan villagers to a Sentence Completion Test, a so-called "projective technique."

Several considerations have prompted this work, its planning, emphases, and aims.

In 1955, when I participated in the preparation of a sociological hand- 122 •
book on Thailand (Sharp *et al.* 1956), I had the task of writing a descrip- 114
tion of the "social values and personality patterns of the Thai," using as sources all available materials in the English language. These sources consisted largely of the writings of travelers, businessmen, and government servants who had worked in Thailand, the comments of introspective Thai, and some preliminary ethnographic studies (R. F. Benedict 1946, Embree 1950, Sharp *et al.* 1953, deYoung 1955, Kaufman 1955, and unpublished field notes of the Cornell Thailand project). It quickly became apparent that these documents—written originally for purposes quite removed from those of psychological analysis—could provide little more than cursory impressions or intriguing clues to the psychological functioning of the Thai, and that a focused, systematic study of Thai personality was a problem for future research. The account that finally emerged from my review of the literature was hardly more than a vocabulary for describing some of the stereotyped forms of Thai social interaction: politeness, the maintenance of a stoical mien in stressful situations, the love of fun, and the like. Although worthy of note, such a lexicon obviously did not represent a thorough or intensive portrayal of Siamese personality. It was 121
with the aim of redressing this situation, therefore, that in the winter of 1956 I undertook a twenty-two-month field research project, a major portion of which is presented in this monograph. Since the research concerns

4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
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such data. Fortunately, the conditions for putting this plan into effect were present in the Thai situation, where extensive ethnographic studies had already been conducted in Bang Chan by Sharp and his colleagues (Sharp *et al.* 1953, Janlekha 1955, L. M. Hanks 1959*a–c*, J. R. Hanks 1959, Textor 1960). To a large degree, the design and phrasing of my project was predicated on the prior existence of these materials.

Second, it was assumed that the states and processes referred to by the concept of personality are among the most complex of phenomena, with as many dimensions and attributes as there are to the concept of culture. This "primitive assumption" was made of course not to acknowledge an obvious truth, but to affirm the necessity that research designs for the study of personality in non-Western societies explicitly exhibit a recognition of the complexity of the task. I would suggest, for example, that collecting a set of Rorschach or TAT protocols during the last hurried weeks of one's field work—not an atypical practice (see Nadel 1955, Spindler 1955*b*, and Hallowell 1955*c*)—and then assuming that the personality portion of one's field work has been "done" is like collecting a list of kinship terms and assuming that all the complex emotional, economic, and juridical elements of actual kinship relationships have been covered. Although most anthropologists recognize the limited intellectual reference of kinship terms (Kroeber 1909 and 1952: 172, Opler 1937 and 1955: 190, Murdock 1949: 113–183, Edmonson 1957, Wallace and Atkins 1960), relatively few have taken an equally circumspect attitude toward the meaning of projective test materials, at least insofar as they have represented themselves to readers. The point is not that TAT protocols or kinship terms are unimportant, but rather that they should be seen as forming only a portion of a complex, cumulative research process, each stage of which should be carefully executed and aimed at dealing with a specific descriptive task. If personality is as involved and multi-dimensional as we all tacitly assume it to be, we should be willing to work with research designs that are equally involved and multi-dimensional.

It was with the above in mind that I worked out a five-stage cumulative research program, the first two stages of which are represented by the data and interpretations in the present volume. The main body of this book has been limited to the two initial stages principally to permit a more complete exploration of the issues involved while at the same time keeping the report to a manageable size. The complete design is outlined below solely to provide the broader theoretical and methodological setting of the present study and to indicate its precise limits.

The first stage (chaps. II and VI) is perhaps descriptively the most

4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
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man who wanted their help for the sake of "knowledge." I came to Thailand because a very wealthy American who manufactured automobiles (The Ford Foundation) had decided to make merit by giving money to universities as well as to monasteries and hospitals; I had applied for a fellowship, and he had given me the money.[4]

In my actual contacts with villagers, I tended to be much more docile and unassertive than is my wont, often to the extent of appearing diffident. Although in the relationships with my assistants I did not hesitate to express my opinions and evaluations of things—often in an excitable and seemingly aggressive way, which is one of my "natural" and extremely non-Thai modes of expression—I tried to keep my comments to villagers free of any evaluation. The only time I really let myself go was in laughter, which villagers liked but which they sometimes thought was undignified. To the countless little frustrations that occur in the field—spending an hour with an informant "making rapport" only to be told that he was too tired to take the TAT; seeing an informant get up at the high point of an interview, say "I must go," and simply leave—I responded either with giggling or stoicism, never anger. This latter posture was particularly difficult to maintain. When the owner of the "Cornell Office" asked me for three times the agreed upon cost of rent and board, I answered first by giggling and then by changing the subject, although neither was in any way representative of my genuine feelings. I later paid the original amount through a go-between, and nothing further was said.

Not all my behavior was oriented toward controlling such feelings, and not all of it was by any means intended as a disguise. In fact, the role of being an "interested, uncritical, and mildly bewildered young man" was not only the best way to present myself to the villagers from the point of view of effective research, but was often the way I felt. (The bewilderment was effective to the extent that it often elicited clarifications and specifications from informants who wanted to be sure I understood.) Similarly, my expressions of laughter were quite consistent with village patterns, and they could not easily be feigned. Perhaps one of the most enjoyable aspects of the pose was when I provided villagers with accurate and truthful answers to questions they might ask, but in an idiom that I thought would be most meaningful to them, *e.g.*, Henry Ford's merit-making activities.

[4] The source of my funds was of never-ending interest to the villagers. One Bang Chaner said he understood what the source of my funds was, but did not quite understand how I actually obtained them. "How does the money get into your wallet?" I explained that prior to my departure from the United States, I made arrangements with my benefactor's secretary to have the money deposited in a bank in Bangkok. And whenever I needed money, I would write a check and obtain the *baht* equivalent of the amount I had written. At this explanation, the villager broke out into a broad smile and said: "That's wonderful. It sounds just like Communism!"

6: Goldsen and Ralis Z-4,5 (1955) 1957
AO7 Central Thai AO7

APPENDIX A

March 1956

HOW THE BANG CHAN SURVEY WAS CONDUCTED

How the Study Came to be Made

121 The survey conducted in May 1955 was part of a program[*] for testing diverse techniques of data-gathering in cultures substantially different from U.S. and Western European cultures, where the survey method of gathering data had been developed and tested.

114 The survey questionnaire was developed and the field work carried out with the help of area specialists of the Cornell Research Center in Bangkok. Mr. Robert B. Textor and Mr. Loebonga Satabhaya of the Cornell Thai staff assisted the field director and recruited the English-speaking Thai university students who interviewed for the survey.

The Questionnaire

12 After a period of training interviewers about the questionnaire and techniques of interviewing, the questionnaire was pretested in a rural community near Bang Chan. Then the staff, consisting of the field director, his deputy, and five Thai interviewers, among them one woman, moved to Bang Chan to carry out the survey.

124 Thai and English-language versions of the schedule were drawn up, but of the 335 interviews conducted in the survey,
125 the overwhelming majority was conducted in the Thai language rather than through an interpreter.

The Interviewers

124 The interviewers were a mixed group: one Thai-speaking American anthropologist; one trained Thai anthropological field worker; two Thai Christians (one a theology, the other a medical student); one Thai Buddhist medical student, one Thai Buddhist female social worker; and an American sociologist who used the Thai interviewers as interpreters.

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[122] * The Cornell Cross-Cultural Methodology Project for the Development and Testing of Improved Methods to Study Underdeveloped Areas is supported by a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation and is a project in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology.

7: Janlekha X-4,5 (1948-1953)1956 AO7 Central Thai AO7

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This study was completed under direct supervision of Professors John W. Mellor, Lauriston Sharp, and Allan R. Holmberg. Their kind guidance and patient encouragement is gratefully acknowledged. The author also expresses his appreciation to Professors Herrel De Graff, Howard E. Conklin, Chandler Morse, and Robert J. Smith as past committee members.

Further credit is due Professor Lucien M. Hanks, Doctor Jane Hanks, Professor Hazel M. Hauck, Mr. Robert B. Textor, and Mr. Lerbongse Sarabhai for advice on field work problems, and Doctor Frank Moore, Mr. Herbert P. Phillips, Mr. David A. Wilson, Mr. Darwin Solomon, and Mr. Melvin W. Wachs for advice during the preparation of this thesis.

The efforts of Bangchan villagers, who willingly and extensively contributed their time and knowledge to this study, are sincerely appreciated.

122 Finally, the author gratefully acknowledges the long-term financial support from the Cornell Southeast Asian Program and from the Government of Thailand which made the present study possible.